Eavesdropping on experts

**Supporting a student with autism at school Tip 1**

[Music]

Chris, I CAN Network

My first tip whether you're a principal or a teacher with supporting students at autism at school is invite a speaker on the autism spectrum to speak at a year level assembly, so every school has your level assemblies. Give ten minutes to a speaker on the autism spectrum to come and talk about what it's like to be on the spectrum but the philosophy of that talk has to be that life on the spectrum can be great and that lots of people can benefit from embracing autism. So because the thing that we need to remember is a lot of the time people in the spectrum are pretty happy in their own world, I know I was but where we experience unhappiness and angst and worry is when other people are thinking that we should be doing something differently, because we have a different intuition you know our normal is a bit different to the typical normal so it helps us out a lot when we are in an understanding environment how do you create understanding you share stories. So bring a speaker in who's on the autism spectrum to share stories of being on the spectrum and experiencing successful pathways.

Michelle, Autism Coach

In relation to supporting a student with autism in school my number one top tip would be to work in a team and so collaborating with as many people as you possibly can for example the student themselves first and foremost family members the teacher from last year perhaps and any other resources and expertise that you can tap into to really understand where that student has experienced success in the past and what areas that you can provide them further support in.

Dawn, Researcher

So my first top tip for supporting students with autism at school is to understand behaviour as a form of communication and I often use the analogy of a tip of an iceberg so the behaviour is a tip of the iceberg the piece we can see but actually there's so much which is built up below that tip that all have produced the behaviour we're seeing. So for example that might be anxiety and mental health difficulties, it might be sensory difficulties, it might be communication profile and these areas build and so what you see is a behaviour, but there's many issues underneath we need to consider in order to understand that behaviour and when you understand behaviour with this approach you begin to understand and need to address each of these areas in order to reduce the need for that behaviour to occur.

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